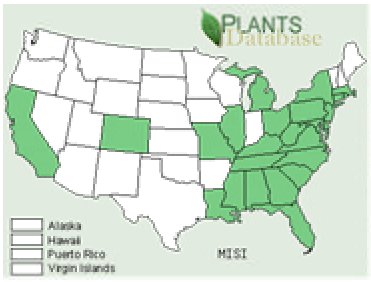
CHINESE SILVERGRASS *Miscanthus sinensis* Anderss.

Eulalia; zebra grass

DESCRIPTION: *Miscanthus sinensis* is a highly variable robust perennial grass that can grow to 2-3m (6.5-10ft.) in height. It is usually found in large tufts. The branches are very flexible and spread or droop. The leaves are elongate and can measure 1m (3ft.) in length and 2.5cm (1in.) across. The leaves have a silver white midrib. The tips of the leaves are sharp and recurving. The fan-shaped terminal panicle is 15-61cm (6-24in.) long and can be silvery to pale pink in color. The branches of the panicle are erect or ascending. These panicles reach full maturity in the fall. The glabrous spikelets are very small, yellow-brown in color and encircled at the base with white or purple-colored hairs. The lemmas measure 2-3mm (0.1in.) long. The fertile lemma contains an awn that is 8-10mm long and is spirally twisted at its base. Chinese silvergrass reproduce through rhizomes however seeds may be dispersed mechanically or through wind.

HABATIT: *M. sinensis* prefers full sun and moist, rich soil that drains well. Slight drought can be tolerated once plants are established. New shoots begin to grow from the ground in March or April. Plants tolerate cold climates but do not grow well in hot, humid southern climates. Horticulturists claim it can be grown in zones 5-9, i.e. it can tolerate winter temperatures as low as -26ºC (-15ºF), and can survive as far south as the Florida panhandle. It has been located along roadsides and disturbed areas that had been burned or cut.

DISTRIBUTION: *Miscanthus sinensis* is native to China, Japan and Korea. In the United States, it has been reported from Massachusetts to Florida and west to Louisiana and Missouri. It has been reported from California and Colorado. In New England, this plant has been reported in Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island.



CONTROL: Mechanical Control: The ability of *M. sinensis* to sprout from pieces of rhizome makes control difficult. The whole underground rhizome system must be killed in order to prevent regrowth the next year. Digging out plants will probably result in resprouts and would need follow-up treatments. Similarly, disking and cutting methods may spread rhizome pieces into clean areas. **Chemical Control:** As with similar bunchgrasses and Pampas grass, foliar application in the fall (2% RoundUp or 1% Fusilade) or in the late spring (4% RoundUp or 2% Fusilade). Lower rates are required in the fall since translocation to the rhizome is occurring at that time.

REFERENCE: http://webapps.lib.uconn.edu/ipane, http://tncweeds.ucdavis.edu/moredocs/missin01.html, http://plants.usda.gov/cgi_bin/plant_profile.cgi?symbol=MISI